

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
805 SW Broadway, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97205

AUG 18 2016

EPA-REGION 10

RE: Harbor Comments

I have lived in the Portland area for 70 years, and though I have retired from full-time teaching, I still work here as a substitute teacher. The current proposal for cleaning up Portland Harbor is highly flawed. For one thing, it is based mostly on data from 2004. It does not take into account more recent studies from 2014, which show a drastic reduction in contamination as a result of natural processes. A lot of things have changed in the last 12 years, and if there is any evidence natural restoration is working, the river should have a chance to heal itself. I agree with the course of action the Army Corps of Engineers recommends: waiting to see how natural processes work and then using more aggressive measures like dredging in a limited manner as necessary.

The cleanup plan is likely to cost more than a billion dollars, money that would be better spent improving animal habitats or figuring out how to minimize the amount of pollutants going in the water in the first place. It also entails turning the river into a permanent construction zone for as long as the project lasts (which could be decades) with heavy machinery operating 24 hours a day, 6 days a week. Besides being expensive in its own right, this would disrupt the local economy and hurt both businesses and jobs. It would also lead to tax increases, which would not make me happy. After all, I am not the one who polluted the river.

The people of Portland should be allowed to deal with the situation as we see fit. It is our problem, and we know our river and our economy better than anyone. If the federal government is going to tell us what to do, it should use federal funds to pay for it. I would rather see a plan with much more local input implemented, one that takes advantage of natural processes and works around the economy.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)



(b) (6)



Portland, OR 97220